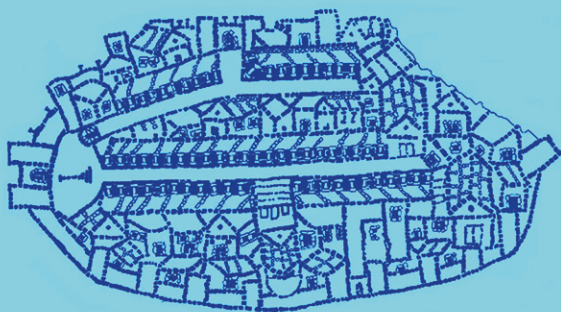


Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins

Herausgegeben von
Jens Kamlah, Achim Lichtenberger und Markus Witte

132 (2016) 2



Harrassowitz Verlag

© Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas e. V., Wiesbaden 2016

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photo-copying, recording, or otherwise), without the prior permission in writing of the *Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas e. V.*, or as expressly permitted by law.

A New *lmlk* Jar Handle from *Hirbet Qīla*

By Issam K.H. Halayqa

The first season (August 7th – September 7th 2014) of a joint project of archaeological surveys and excavations at *Hirbet Qīla* was undertaken by Birzeit University, the Palestinian Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage, and Montpellier University¹. In search for archaeological remains and in order to carry out a site-assessment study for the destruction at the site², two areas were chosen for excavations. Area A is located on the western part of the top of the hill. Three squares (5 × 5 m each) were opened in Sector 14 in Area A. Area B was set on the southeastern slope of the hill and contained 4 squares (5 × 5 m each). After excavating in Square 1 in Area A, the data gained from that square indicated that the area served for food production or was part of an industrial area. A grain silo, part of a wine press and grinding mortars have been uncovered here in addition to twenty loom weights found scattered in the fill. In Area B a section of 20 m of the city wall as well as a rectangular tower (5 × 4 m) were unearthed. The preliminary investigation of the material from the survey and the excavations at the site date the material to the Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, Iron Age II as well as to the Classic and Islamic periods.

1. The Jar Handle

During the excavations, on the 17th of August 2014, a stamped jar handle with a *lmlk* seal impression³ was found on the surface near the southwest corner of Square 1 in Area A (Fig. 1; Taf. 15). The handle fragment was partially covered with plaster material indicating that it once may have been embedded in a layer like the nearby Locus 14 (1.5 m below the surface) containing light grey soil mixed with plaster material and Iron Age II pottery sherds.

The handle fragment is 8.5 cm long and 7.0 cm wide. It was well-fired and made of light grey clay mixed with coarse white and grey grits. The surface color of the handle is light red. The cross section of the handle corresponds to the two ridged type separated by a shallow or double ridge extending over the whole length of the handle⁴.

¹ *Hirbet Qīla* is located at the western side of the town *Bēt Ūlā*, about 14 km northwest of Hebron. The site was probably known as *uru Qiltu* (< *Qīiltu*) in Amarna tablets (EA 279:12; 280:10–11; 287:11?; 289:28; 290:10, 18; cf. MORAN 1992, 391). It is identified with biblical Keilah (*qā'ilāh* [q'ylh/q'lh]; Josh 15:44; 1 Sam 23:1–23; 1 Chr 4:19; Neh 3:17; KOEHLER/BAUMGARTNER 2001, 1116; ALBRIGHT 1925, 51; LUX 1974, 193 with n. 40; RAINEY 1983, 3–5, 11; DeVRIES 1992). The team of the University of Montpellier was directed by Dr. SYLVIE BLÉTRY.

² Investigations of the damage caused by antiquity looters have shown that the site is heavily destroyed. Many pits of different depths (1.5–3.0 m) and sizes (2–5 m. in diameter) can be clearly seen everywhere on the site. The looters in many cases have refilled the pits. It seems that in many places the remains of the Islamic, Classic, and Iron Age II layers have been totally destroyed or removed. This was confirmed by the data from squares in Area A where plastic pieces and other recent finds were unearthed until a depth of 2.5–3.0 m.

³ On the *lmlk* seal impressions cf. for example the comprehensive bibliographies in the recent publications YOUNG 2012, 50–58; NA'AMAN 2016.

⁴ Cf. for example DIRINGER 1949, 73–74; LAPP 1960, 14.

The stamp seal was 20mm wide and approximately 27mm long. It was impressed longitudinally on the jar handle⁵ leaving an oval seal impression which contains a two-winged symbol in the center. The displayed symbol is a representation of a protrusive two-winged figure (two-winged solar disc). The head and the tail are clearly visible. In contrast, the impression of the seal did leave no traces of the wingtips. It is evident however, that the seal belongs to Type H IIB 1 according to the typology of PETER WELTEN⁶.

Letters were applied in two lines framing the two-winged symbol at the top and at the bottom. The upper line displays the word *lmlk* which is divided in two parts. Each part contains two letters written above the spread wings of the symbol. Below the tail of symbol the word *hbrn* occupies the lower line of the inscription. The two lines of the inscription must be read separately⁷:

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>lmlk</i> | “Belonging/of/to the king”, “royal” |
| <i>hbrn</i> | “(from) Hebron” |

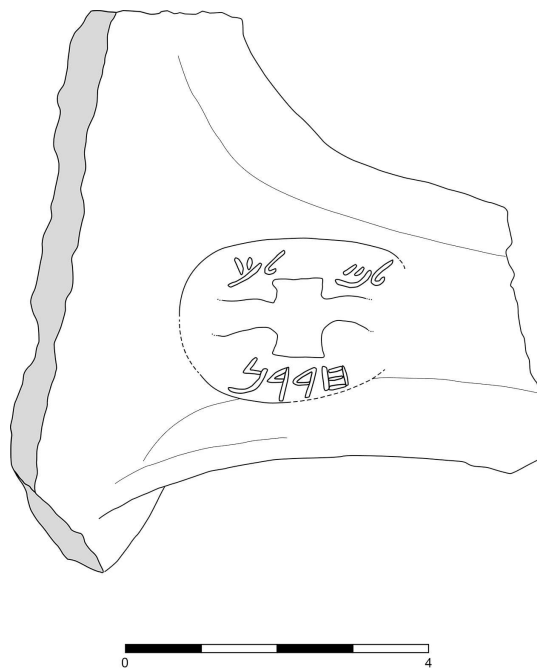


Fig. 1. Jar handle with *lmlk* seal impression from *Hirbet Qīla*.

⁵ Cf. for example PRITCHARD 1959, 20.

⁶ WELTEN 1969, 37; cf. GRENA 2004, 21 with table 17 for cross references to other typologies.

⁷ Cf. WELTEN 1969, 8.

2. Epigraphic Description

The script on this seal impression which belongs to class 3 shows more advanced forms in comparison with the script on classes 1 and 2. This observation is mainly notable in regards to the form of the *mēm*⁸.

Upper register: The stem of the *lāmed* is inclining towards the right. Its bottom is rounded and is hook-like⁹. The *mēm* has three diagonal strokes without crossbar¹⁰. The main leg of the *mēm* is bent leftwards¹¹. The lower stem of the *kaf* is curving left, while the central stroke is inclining to the left side¹².

Lower register: The vertical strokes of the *ḥēt* go beyond the horizontal ones¹³. The head of the *bēt* is triangle in form but slightly elongated. Its leg is hardly to be seen because of the curvature of the handle. The *rēš* has an approximate triangular head and – as far as it is visible – a vertical leg¹⁴. The *nūn* has an open squared head. Its leg is curving slightly leftwards¹⁵. Due to the incomplete impression of the seal, the lower parts of the letters *ḥēt*, *bēt* and *rēš* are not completely visible¹⁶.

3. Date and Distribution

Since the archaeological context of the sherd is uncertain, it is difficult to determine the exact date of the handle. If we rely on epigraphy and analogy from other similar examples, we can say that the seal impression is of the two-winged symbol which has a longer period of use than the four winged symbol¹⁷. Therefore it can be placed in the late 8th until the early 7th cent. B.C.E. This type is widely distributed in the hill country and the lowland and has been discovered in many sites from *Tell en-Naṣbe* in the north to the Negev in the south¹⁸, and from *Tell el-Ğazari*/Gezer and *Tell eš-Šēḥ Aḥmed el-‘Arēnī* in the west to *Ḥirbet Qumrān* and Engedi in the east¹⁹. As *Ḥirbet Qīla* is located in the lowland²⁰, the discovery of the stamped jar handle there is not surprising. The site is not far from *Tell ed-Duwēr*/Lachish that produced the most remarkable collection of *lmlk* seal impressions. The *lmlk* seal impressions

⁸ Cf. DIRINGER 1953, 343.

⁹ Cf. DIRINGER 1953, Pl. 46b:4–5; 1941, Pl. 7:4–5.

¹⁰ Cf. DIRINGER 1953, Pl. 46b:4–6; CROSS 1962, 22 nos. 16–17, 21, 26; DIRINGER 1941, Pl. 7:5; WELTEN 1969, 39 ERR II 38,12.

¹¹ Cf. DIRINGER 1941, Pl. 7:4–6.

¹² Cf. DIRINGER 1941, Pl. 7:5; 1953, Pl. 46b:4–5.

¹³ Cf. DIRINGER 1941, Pl. 7:4–5.

¹⁴ Cf. DIRINGER 1941, Pl. 7:4.

¹⁵ Cf. DIRINGER 1941, Pl. 7:5–6.

¹⁶ Cf. DIRINGER 1953, Pl. 46b:4; 1941 Pl. 7:4; PRITCHARD 1959, fig. 9:521.

¹⁷ Cf. most recently NA’AMAN 2016, 122. Cf. also older studies like DIRINGER 1949, 76–77; LAPP 1960, 15. Comparable seal impressions are known from *Tell ed-Duwēr*/Lachish (DIRINGER 1953, 346 table a), from *el-Ğib*/Gibeon (PRITCHARD 1959, 18), from Jerusalem, from *Tell el-Baṭāšī* (TUSHINGHAM 1992, 62–63) and from other sites.

¹⁸ See DIRINGER 1949, 78; LAPP 1960, 16–17; NA’AMAN 1986, 11 and 14–15; see also RAINEY 1982, 60 and GRENA 2004, 18–19.

¹⁹ See NA’AMAN 1979, 76; cf. AHARONI 1967, 344.

²⁰ Where the majority of stamped jar handles have been found from *Tell ed-Duwēr*/Lachish, *Tell Sandahanna*/Maresha, and *Tell Zakariye*/Azekah (cf. NA’AMAN 1986, 11 and 14; DIRINGER 1953, 347 table b).

bear short and stereotyped texts composed of two lines, one line over a symbol (four or two winged symbol) and the other line below it²¹. The upper line consists of four letters *lmlk* “to the king/of the king/belonging to the king”, “royal”. The characters of the word *lmlk* are written either together or divided into two parts. While the lower line is occupied by one of the following four place names: *ḥbrn* “Hebron”, *z(y)p* “Ziph”, *śwkh* “Socoh” and *mmšr* (which is unknown).

It is noteworthy to mention that, despite of more than a hundred years of research on this topic, the scholarly debate is still ongoing about the typology²², the date of the *lmlk* seal impressions²³, symbolism of the two-winged figure²⁴, and the location²⁵ and the function²⁶ of the four place names associated with *lmlk* seal impressions. Hopefully further finds of *lmlk* seal impressions from archaeological excavations will help clarifying the major issues of this glyptic tradition.

Bibliography

- AHARONI, Y.
1967 The Land of the Bible. A Historical Geography (London).
- ALBRIGHT, W.F.
1925 The Administrative Divisions of Israel and Judah, in: The Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society 5, 17–54.
1943 The Excavation of Tell Beit Mirsim, III. The Iron Age. With a Chapter by J.L. KELSO and J.P. THORLEY (The Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research 21/22; New Haven).
- CROSS, F.M.
1962 Epigraphical Notes on Hebrew Documents of the Eighth-Sixth Centuries B.C., III. The Inscribed Jar Handles from Gibeon, in: Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research 168, 18–23.

²¹ Cf. for example WELTEN 1969, 4.

²² The most important division of the *lmlk* seal impressions falls into two types: 1. Impressions with the four-winged symbol (representing the Egyptian motif of a flying scarab); 2. Impressions with the two-winged symbol. See most recently NA'AMAN 2016 with further references. For older studies see for example DIRINGER 1949, 73–74 and 76; PRITCHARD 1959, 23; LAPP 1960, 21; AHARONI 1967, 342–343; LANCE 1971, 316.

²³ For a recent assessment of the scholarly debate on the dating of the *lmlk* seal impressions see NA'AMAN 2016, 111–113. It seems evident that the *lmlk* sealing system was introduced by King Hezekiah (714–686 B.C.E.) and that after Sennacherib's campaign of the year 701 B.C.E. only the two winged symbol remained in use.

²⁴ Many proposals have been set to interpret this symbol, e.g. a flying or winged scroll (ALBRIGHT 1943, 74; DIRINGER 1949, 74; 1953, 342) or a winged solar disk (LAPP 1960, 12). TUSHINGHAM 1992, 61 considers a two-winged solar disk which was used as the emblem of the official seal of Judah. He assumed that the use of two-winged figures (two winged solar disks) was abandoned during the reign of Josiah because of its foreign mythological connotations (cf. also most recently NA'AMAN 2016, 122).

²⁵ Four place names appear on *lmlk* seal impressions: *ḥbrn* “Hebron”, *śwkh* “Socoh”, *z(y)p* “Ziph”, and *mmšr* (which remains unknown). Except for Hebron, the location of these sites is still disputed between scholars; see for instance KLETTER 2002, 136–139.

²⁶ For the function and role of these four places various proposals have been made, e.g. capitals of four districts with store houses in which oil and wine was collected as a form of taxes (cf. for example ALBRIGHT 1925, 51–52; cf. also most recently NA'AMAN 2016, 122); royal pottery production centers (DIRINGER 1949, 80, 82); royal vineyards with winery in Hebron under royal control (LAPP 1960, 22); royal estates (WELTEN 1969, 133–142 and 173–174).

- DEVRIES, L. F.
1992 Keilah, in: D. N. FREEDMAN (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, IV (New York *et al.*), 13–14.
- DIRINGER, D.
1941 On Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions Discovered at Tell ed-Duweir (Lachish)-II, in: *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 73, 89–109.
1949 The Royal Jar Handle Stamps of Ancient Judah, in: *The Biblical Archaeologist* 12, 70–86.
1953 Early Hebrew Inscriptions, in: O. TUFNELL, *Lachish, III. The Iron Age. With Contributions by M. A. MURRAY and D. DIRINGER (The Wellcome-Marston Archaeological Research Expedition to the Near East III; London)*, 331–359.
- GINSBERG, H. L.
1948 MMŠT and MŠH, in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 109, 20–22.
- GRENA, G. M.
2004 LMLK -- A Mystery Belonging to the King, I (Redondo Beach).
- KLETTER, R.
2002 Temptation to Identify. Jerusalem, *mmšt*, and the *lmlk* Jar Stamps, in: *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 118, 136–149.
- KOEHLER, L. / W. BAUMGARTNER
2001 *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament. Study Edition, I–II* (Leiden).
- LANCE, H. D.
1971 The Royal Stamps and the Kingdom of Josiah, in: *Harvard Theological Review* 64, 315–332.
- LAPP, P. W.
1960 Late Royal Seals from Judah, in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 158, 11–22.
- LUX, U.
1974 Das Deutsche Evangelische Institut für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes in den Jahren 1970 und 1971, in: *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 90, 185–225.
- MORAN, W. L.
1992 *The Amarna Letters. Edited and Translated* (Baltimore; London).
- NA'AMAN, N.
1979 Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah and the Date of the *LMLK* Stamps, in: *Vetus Testamentum* 29, 61–86.
1986 Hezekiah's Fortified Cities and the *LMLK* Stamps, in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 261, 5–21.
2016 The *lmlk* Seal Impressions Reconsidered, in: *Tel Aviv* 43, 111–125.
- PRITCHARD, J. B.
1959 *Hebrew Inscriptions and Stamps from Gibeon (The University of Pennsylvania. Museum Monographs; Philadelphia)*.
- RAINEY, A. F.
1982 Wine from the Royal Vineyards, in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 245, 57–62.
1983 The Biblical Shephelah of Judah, in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 251, 1–22.
- TUSHINGHAM, A. D.
1992 New Evidence Bearing on the Two-Winged *LMLK* Stamp, in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 287, 61–65.
- WELTEN, P.
1969 *Die Königs-Stempel. Ein Beitrag zur Militärpolitik Judas unter Hiskia und Josia (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins [1]; Wiesbaden)*.
- YOUNG, R. A.
2012 *Hezekiah in History and Tradition (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 155; Leiden, Boston)*.



Jar handle with *lmlk* seal impression from *Ḥirbet Qīla*.

| | |
|---|-----|
| A Snapshot of the Destruction Layer of <i>Tell Zakariye/Azekah</i> Seen against the Backdrop of the Final Days of the Late Bronze Age. By SABINE KLEIMAN, YUVAL GADOT and ODED LIPSHITS | 105 |
| Drei Stempelsiegelamulette aus <i>Hirbet Qēyafa</i> . Von SILVIA SCHROER | 134 |
| A New <i>Imlk</i> Jar Handle from <i>Hirbet Qīla</i> . By ISSAM K. H. HALAYQA | 146 |
| Medieval Town Structures of Arsur on the Basis of Non-Invasive Methods. Results of a German-Israeli Project Collaboration. By HAUKE KENZLER | 151 |
| Rezensionen | |
| <i>Petter, Thomas D.</i> , The Land between the Two Rivers. Early Israelite Identities in Central Transjordan (Winona Lake 2014). Rez. E. GASS | 175 |
| <i>Strange, John (ed.)</i> , Tall al-Fukhār. Results from Excavations in 1990–93 and 2002 (Proceedings of the Danish Institute in Damascus 9; Aarhus 2015). Rez. T. BÜRGE | 180 |
| <i>Zangenberg, Jürgen K. (ed.)</i> , Herodes. König von Judäa (Darmstadt 2016). Rez. A. LICHTENBERGER | 183 |
| Mitteilungen | |
| Vereinsmitteilungen | 184 |
| Professor Dr. Dr. Dr. h.c. Herbert Donner. 16. Februar 1930 – 28. April 2016. Von MANFRED WEIPPERT | 186 |
| Professor Dr. Gert Jeremias. 3. April 1936 – 12. August 2016. Von JENS KAMLAH und HERMANN LICHTENBERGER | 191 |
| Ausschreibung des Jahres 2016 von Fördermitteln für das Jahr 2017 | 194 |
| Bei der Redaktion eingegangene Bücher | 195 |

Der Deutsche Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas

veröffentlicht entsprechend seinen Zielsetzungen wissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Landeskunde, Geschichte und Kultur Palästinas und seiner Nachbarländer. Aufsätze, Berichte, Buchbesprechungen und Mitteilungen erscheinen in der *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* (ZDPV), die in der Regel halbjährlich herausgegeben wird. Die in der ZDPV eingehenden Manuskripte werden interdisziplinär und international begutachtet. Seit 1969 werden in unregelmäßiger Folge auch Monographien in den *Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* (ADPV) veröffentlicht. Die ZDPV ist zugleich Organ des Deutschen Evangelischen Instituts für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes. Bei Stiftungen oder letztwilligen Vermächtnissen für den Verein lautet der Name in rechtsgültiger Form: Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas.

Der *Mitgliederjahresbeitrag*, in dem der Bezugspreis dieser Zeitschrift inbegriffen ist, beläuft sich für korporative wie für individuelle Mitglieder derzeit auf € 40,–, für Studierende gegen Vorlage einer Immatrikulationsbescheinigung auf € 20,–, und soll nur bei der Postbank, Niederlassung Frankfurt am Main, Bankleitzahl 500 100 60, über das Konto Nr. 3548-604 „Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas“ (IBAN: DE61 5001 0060 0003 5486 04; SWIFT-BIC: PBNKDEFF) entrichtet werden. Der *Bezugspreis* der Zeitschrift im Buchhandel beträgt zur Zeit € 50,–.

Manuskripte und *Rezensionsexemplare* sind zu senden an Prof. Dr. J. KAMLAH (Anschrift siehe den hinteren Umschlag dieses Heftes), *Tauschexemplare* an die Bibliothek des DPV, c/o Prof. Dr. U. HÜBNER, Theologische Fakultät, Leibnizstraße 4, D-24118 Kiel.

Die Adresse der *Homepage* des DPV lautet: <http://www.palaestina-verein.de>